The Commonweal

November 30, 1951

THE "SOUTHERN PARISH" CASE

Paul Courtney

Don Luigi Sturzo: a Memoir

H. A. Reinhold

Volume LV **15c** *Number 8*

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"For the Continual Prayer of a just man availeth much"

St. James 5:16

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Fruits of Secularism

THE headlines continue to feature forced or fearful resignations from office in the Internal Revenue Department, convictions of crooked gamblers and college athletes, and widespread corruption among our city police. The end does not appear to be in sight. There are a few attempts to deal with the surface of the matter: one effort to cut football down to size. A few local incumbents charged with malfeasance were thrown out of office by indignant voters earlier this month. Corruption in office will be a major campaign issue in 1952.

What has come to light in recent months, however, is hardly a new phenomenon. Many of the misdoings revealed have been known and permitted for years. The disquieting thing is that so many law-abiding citizens accept these as normal elements in our political life—that we lack a solid sense of civic values.

This year's statement by the bishops of the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference confronts that basic problem head on. It declares that "One and the same standard covers stealing from the cash register and dishonest gain derived from public office." Such sentiments as "my life is my own affair." or "in politics anything goes" indicate a failure to understand the moral order, which has application to all aspects of one's everyday life. For once a man "acknowledges that God exists, then the claims of God are co-extensive with all the activities of His creatures."

Another thing that raises doubts about America's qualifications as the chief defender of justice, liberty and peace in the world is the level of our political debate. "Dishonesty, slander, detraction and defamation of character are as truly transgressions of God's commandments when resorted to by men in political life as they are for all other men."

The problem of political morality in our American democracy does not devolve upon only a handful of men. It is the responsibility of all of us, voter and public servant alike. In order to seek God's Kingdom in general, and a moral political order in particular, the bishops call attention to a meditation of Cardinal Newman's: "God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission . . . I have a part in a great work; I am a link in the chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good. I shall do His work." That goes for every citizen.

We send out our young men to fight and die for justice and freedom on foreign soil. Yet at home "we have become careless about the foundations of justice and the roots of freedom." The bishops find evidence in the fall of the Roman Empire, from corruption within and barbarism without, that "Mastery over material things will avail us nothing if we lose mastery over ourselves."

A parallel between our present danger and the last days of the Roman Empire is ominously suggested in a passage cited from Augustine: "They do not trouble about the moral degradation of the Empire. All they ask that it be prosperous and secure. . . . Let the laws protect the rights of property and let them leave man's morals alone. . . ."

Negotiating

THAT the Western Powers are still making great efforts to come to an agreement with the Soviet Union—meanwhile keeping their powder dry as a necessary precaution—is shown by developments in London and Paris. France has always sought to be conciliatory. And now the British Conservatives, Mr. Acheson and the Big Three at the UN have made the gesture, each in a characteristic way.

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Anthony Eden, in his first major speech as the new Foreign Secretary, outlined to the House of Commons an "empirical" approach to the problem of agreement with the USSR. Eschewing all wide general discussion, sterile debate and mutual recrimination with the Soviets on the basis of past experience, he would seek mutual agreement on smaller political issues one by one. The hope would be that the conclusion of a series of agreements piecemeal would in time convince the Soviet Union that there is nothing to fear.

Mr. Acheson, for his part, has been tackling the job from the disarmament angle. He has proposed before the UN Assembly the taking of an inventory of armed forces and armaments, including atomic weapons, as a preliminary to a progressive disarmament that would lessen present tensions in the world. To accept this the Soviets would have to permit international inspection; the inventory would have to be certified. At the same time Mr. Acheson is engaged in a realistic attempt to bring the Korean War to a conclusion. The truce line is all but settled, but the Communists have yet to agree to such exchange of prisoners and prevention of a new Chinese build-up as due American precautions would require.

The Big Three disarmament proposal in the UN goes far to meet previous Soviet objections. Hence it would place all armament supervision, including atomic, under a single commission which would be responsible to the Security Council. A veto would thus still be possible. All nations, including Communist China, would be urged to participate. In general the Western Powers have gone out of their way to remove all possible Soviet objections in advance.

In the end this may all be simply for the record; the Kremlin may never relent. But it adds up to evidence that for all their defense preparations the Atlantic powers refuse to leave any peaceful channel unexplored. They are bent on peace. Firepower is not their lone answer to Soviet aggression. They are giving the USSR every opportunity to reach a *modus vivendi* that would keep guns and bombs from going off.

• NEXT WEEK •

ABBE ERNEST DIMNET writes of the "Paradox of the French Mind."

"Directness, neatness, an aversion to any mist of illusion born of muddled thinking ought to make the Frenchman an eminently practical individual. Yet these very words have something laughable about them: the French are a classical example of unpracticality. The American reader who has visited Paris thinks atonce of the French telephone which, in fact, was my own personal enemy until automatism, imported from the United States, created infallibility."

To Confound the Strong

DON LUIGI STURZO is eighty years old this month. The founder of the Italian Popular Party has outlived many of his more robust contemporaries. He has experienced defeat and years of exile as a direct result of the concordat with Mussolini. Five years ago he returned in triumph to the land that owes him so much. He has seen the Christian Democrat movement which he so unflaggingly championed come to political responsibility and power.

Certain distinctions must be candidly admitted. Italy's Christian Democrats of today are considerably more conservative and less pioneering than the original Popular Party with its workingmen's associations, labor newspapers, cooperatives and credit unions. Premier de Gasperi is indeed one of the veterans of the movement and his party has a progressive wing that pushes hard for such things as serious land reform. But the Party came to power after the war as a sort of catch-all for all the elements in Italy opposed to Communism. The Christian Democrats had the only party structure upon which to erect anti-Communist defenses. But despite its more chastened character Don Sturzo continues to serve his party as an inspiration and guide from his modest quarters in the Eternal City.

The French MRP likewise embodies marked contrasts to the original Popular Party. It does not go in much for program, either. It was born during the war and occupation in the womb of the Resistance. Christian Democrat leaders of MRP had a brief taste of power immediately after the war on another catch-all basis. Since then it has declined as a political factor, although it is still one of the main elements in the present governing coalition. The Adenauer Christian Democrats would appear to derive more directly from the former German Center Party than from the Sturzo movement.

But all in all, Christian Democracy comprises an important political factor on the European Continent. It serves as an effective counter-bal-

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ance both to Socialists and Rightists of all sorts —as well as a bulwark against European Communists.

One frail and gentle native of Sicily is primarily responsible: Don Luigi Sturzo, a man who for years has had to conduct the affairs of his movement from a sick-bed. Don Sturzo, whose wit and conversational sparkle belie the ponderousness of the English translations of his books. A statesman, a philosopher and a priest who refused to admit defeat. He has conquered failing health, years of forced exile from his beloved Italy, what amounted to abandonment by the Vatican, discouragement all round. Yet he never faltered; his many disciples never lost faith in him. Could anyone serve as a better modern instance of the Creator's predilection for choosing the weak among men to confound the strong?

The Campaign

ALTHOUGH the Presidential election of 1952 is nearly a year off, the campaign has begun and there are already signs that the chief issue of the campaign will be foreign policy. Mr. Taft, the most prominent candidate in the field, has been quick to publish a book on the subject; General MacArthur has devoted most of his speeches to an attack on the Administration's foreign policy and he is expected to keep on doing so; Senator McCarthy, and those who openly or tacitly follow his lead, have done their best to put the heat on Secretary Acheson in an effort to personalize McCarthy's charge that the Administration has followed a weak policy toward Communism. At the moment these men are among the leaders of the opposition, and it is very doubtful that they will yield on the issue of foreign policy in the interest of arriving at a bi-partisan agreement to remove foreign affairs from domestic politics.

Even the contemplated candidacy of General Eisenhower is principally bound up with foreign policy. It is generally thought that if Eisenhower decides to run he will do so to save the Republican Party from the Taft-MacArthur foreign policy, with its foot-dragging attitude toward the Atlantic Pact and its half-hearted commitment to collective security (both Taft and MacArthur think little or nothing of the United Nations), an attitude that Eisenhower is thought to be greatly disturbed by.

There are obvious and serious risks involved in throwing foreign policy into political debate. We are living at a time when one false move can lead to atomic war and under these circumstances it is not desirable for a nation to conduct its foreign affairs in an atmosphere clouded by partisan passion.

It may be that if the debate on foreign policy comes, it will prove to be a good thing. It may be that all of us will be driven to think more about such matters as the austere economic condition of Europe, the revolutionary hunger of the Asiatics, the fanaticism of the Middle East, the rising crest of totalitarianism in Argentina, and the hundred and one other complex and perplexing situations around the world calling for attention. Maybe then we will realize the overwhelming burden our State Department and our diplomats are carrying, and it may just be that we will then be a little less free with our criticism of these men. For the truth is, the United States is called upon today to fashion a foreign policy such as the world has never seen: that is, it must fill the vacuums created by the retreating imperialist powers of Europe without itself forming an empire or seeming to do so and without losing those threatened areas in Europe, Asia and the Middle East to Russian Communism by aggression or default. It is a tremendous undertaking for any nation. No one has appeared with an easy solution to the whole problem and so the natural psychological "out" is to look for a scapegoat, someone to blame the whole thing on, and there is, as we know, a real danger that we are substituting this easy psychological out for the tough job of planning our way together.

A good illustration of this mentality was supplied recently by the now famous incident involving the father of a Marine who wrote the President suggesting that his (the father's) political opposition to the President may have led Mr. Truman to deny the Congressional Medal of Honor to his son. The father released this letter to the press before Mr. Truman had a chance to answer. It made the headlines. When the President responded, saying that he had nothing to do with recommending awards won on the battlefield, the father apologized to Mr. Truman for "the medal" matter, but his retraction made no headlines.

And so it is. The retraction never quite catches up with the accusation. This is the McCarthy technique at large and the tragedy is that this kind of loose thinking sneaks up on us bit by bit until it has infected our minds, blocking tolerance, reason, common sense and, ultimately, a dispassionate diplomacy. In the end, we work our own destruction.

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These Three

THERE is no reason why I should feel capable of writing about Don Luigi Sturzo, the great Italian priest whose eightieth birthday is being noted in this issue. Still it may be good to have a word from one for whom Don Sturzo is a somewhat vague figure no more distinct than any other man of history.

I never saw Don Sturzo, even during the years he lived in poverty in Brooklyn. But from his photos I have a clear enough picture of the man: thin, delicate, sensitive, the face of a scholar. I have not read his books very carefully, nor am I familiar with the details of his life. Still his name means something, evokes an image. The image is of a practical idealist, the blending of the man of action and the man of thought in one noble personality.

From what I have been able to piece together from people who know him well, Don Sturzo's reputation will grow with the years. The man is a symbol of something which transcends the particular political struggle in which he became a key figure; it transcends politics itself. Don Sturzo is a great *human* symbol.

Look to the bare outline of his career: a man who worked for democracy in Italy against great odds, who fell victim to Mussolini's hold on the popular imagination and his dictatorial power; a fallen leader who lived for more than twenty years in patient, poverty-ridden exile; who returned to an Italy broken by war and suffering but free; now, in his old age, a man who enjoys almost universal respect as a kind of elder statesman.

Don Sturzo's prestige is now at a high point. From a friend who sees him regularly in Rome, I get a picture of an old man, still amazingly lively and alert, plunged deep into the concerns of the moment but still living on the inner resources that pulled him through the years of neglect. He bears the present honors and prestige, my friend says, with the same calm dignity that sustained him while he languished in the Brooklyn furnished room.

A great *human* symbol. What does that mean? Well, all this must be very personal. Figures like Don Sturzo represent integrity—that I suppose was clear even to his enemies. But more than personal integrity, to me, such persons represent the ultimate Christian virtues as they apply particularly to the social and political order. I mean, of course, faith, hope and charity.

This may sound like something of a hodge-podge. It isn't too easy to make clear. I am not speaking of fatih in the usual strict sense of the word. What I mean is faith in faith itself.

Put it this way. Don Sturzo's story, fundamentally, is that of a man who would not compromise on essential matters. The moral outlines of fascism were clear enough. No Christian thinker would have defended it as an abstract idea. If it had only a textbook existence, the anathemas would surely have been hurled. But fascism was more than an abstract idea. It was a political reality. There was the figure of Mussolini, a man of weight and substance; there was the blaring oratory from the balcony, which created real sounds hitting real ears; there were the castor-oil treatments, the threats and prison dungeons, the obedient state police—grim realities, all these things, and they added up to fascism.

Given the facts, the understandable tendency was to play along with them: to rationalize, to excuse, to affect blindness, to speak of fascism as if it were something else than what it was. As Father Reinhold makes clear in his memoir, the Don Sturzos were few and far between.. Even in this country Father Gillis and Michael Williams, among Catholic editors, were almost lone voices calling a spade a spade. Why? Because, with Mussolini in power, it was so hard to keep faith with faith; to *act* on the belief that these things were evil and reject the idea that if one did not come to terms with reality, however reprehensible, all would be lost.

The question of hope is very close. Without faith there can be no hope; without hope, faith is meaningless. Obviously, Don Sturzo never gave up hope. He continued to believe that decency and honesty and fidelity to faith itself would one day be rewarded. Unlike many, he lived to see the day. Not many involved in the social order can depend on that. But every genuine leader is marked by his devotion to hope. He sees a world where the ugly thing which seems so powerful now will be destroyed and the opportunity for constructive work will be restored. Vision is essential for the leader. When a man no longer hopes, he no longer leads.

Charity is the thing, Don Sturzo's friends say, that ultimately makes him great. It moved him to action in the first place. It kept him from bitterness during the years of rejection when a lesser soul might have shrivelled. Now in his moment of hard-earned honor it saves him from any trace of arrogance and self-satisfaction. Without love, the social or political leader is a mere technician, and he usually ends up a tyrant.

All this may be said to honor Don Luigi Sturzo. No one today honors Signor Mussolini. No one honors those who served him like frightened slaves. In the story of Don Sturzo, I think, there lurks a lesson for all of us who court the disreputable mighty, not because we approve of their behavior but because we foolishly believe they hold the key to survival.

Happily for us, we have never had to deal with a Mussolini in this country. It is easy for us to imagine ourselves as heroic Christian resisters, ready to sacrifice every immediate gain in order to serve our principles. But the closest parallels we have are dishonest and corrupt politicians who often hold the strings to local power and privilege. Catholics have not been notable for their resistance to them, no more than any other group which stands to gain from their favor. Indeed, we have sometimes seen these men actually honored and flattered. It is an old scandal; we have almost grown used to it. But when one thinks of someone like Don Sturzo and of his ultimate triumph the perennial scandal seems even more scandalous, the supposed realism that justifies it seems less realistic.

JOHN COGLEY.

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The "Southern Parish" Case

The dynamics of suppression: "a few overly sensitive clerics lost their heads . . ."

By PAUL COURTNEY

THIS IS A report on an incident in New Orleans in which a few overly sensitive clerics lost their heads and Catholic America lost three valuable volumes of original sociological research.

The story begins with the publication on September 21 by the University of Chicago Press of *Southern Parish: The Dynamics of a City Church,* written by Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., head of the Department of Sociology of Loyola University of the South. The jacket stated that the series of which this was Volume I would be composed of four volumes. Those who distrust jacket blurbs now have added reason for their stand, for Volume I will be the beginning and the end of the series. The remaining books—the word is not used on the scene but the fact remains—have been suppressed.

Dynamics of a City Church is the first fruit of an intense, year-long sociological study of an urban parish, financed jointly by the Carnegie Foundation and Loyola University, and conceived, directed and reported by Father Fichter. The urban parish can be located in New Orleans now, because despite the author's efforts at anonymity, the fact has been made public by the book's antagonists. No reader in Spokane, Peoria, or Passaic would have cared about locating the exact scene, nor thought less kindly of it if they had. But the city is now known, and, locally, the parish, too.

Father Fichter had as his objective the "systematic sociological analysis of the operation and structure of an American Catholic parish." It is a first attempt at such objective study, and its author hoped that despite its technical limitations, it would open up to Catholic students and departments of sociology a whole new area of investigation. Certainly Volume I presents a stimulating and challenging beginning.

It also presents some appalling facts, long suspected, but never before crystallized so brutally in figures. *The Dynamics of a City Church* concerns itself with the "central religious functions" of the parish of "St. Mary's." Random chapter titles reveal something of its scope: "The People of St. Mary's," "Recruitment to the Parish," "The Confessional," "Communion with God," "The Sacrament of Matrimony," "The Sick and the Dead," "Mass on Sundays," "The Observance of Lent," "The Word of God." According to the study, of the 10,946 white persons in the parish who said they were Catholics, 4,219 were for all practical purposes completely "dormant"; of the 6,727 who can be considered Catholics for this study of the "dynamics" of the parish, an average of only 3,465 attend Mass on the Sundays of the year; of the 5,281 who might be communicants, 1,117 volunteered the information that they do not fulfill their "Easter duties." A final chapter on "The Catholic Mind of the Parish" scores 68 parishioners belonging to the "inner circle" of practicing Catholics on their answers to 16 questions. The questions ranged from the purely dogmatic, such as "Do you believe that the devil is a real person?", to what the author labels "interpretable matters," such as "Do you think that every Catholic workingman ought to belong to a good labor union?". In relation to the certain or ideal answers to the questions, the inner-circle Catholics scored 56.98%.

The book is done an injustice by such quoting of miscellaneous statistics. Better to describe it with Father H. A. Reinhold in *Books on Trial* as a "bombshell, gently laid down in the midst of a smug Catholicism." The actual impact on the reader, which comes solely from the calm objective presentation of facts, since Father Fichter never editorializes, and the potential impact on the Church in America are beyond measure.

Volume II on church societies and Volume III on parochial and family life were readied for publication, and Volume IV on particular problems of parish structure was in the process of preparation when the suppression came. The merely extrinsic facts of the author's earning a doctorate from Harvard and his heading of the department of sociology at the largest Catholic university in the South, together with the confidence expressed in the project by the Carnegie Foundation and the University of Chicago Press, indicate that the work reported in the remaining volumes could not possibly be grossly incom-

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PAUL COURTNEY is a pseudonym for a priest of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

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petent. Hence, the reason for halting publication must be sought outside of the volumes themselves.

★

THE RESEARCH project began quietly and happily. The author had set up certain criteria for choosing a parish for study and, after much deliberation, settled upon one. The work had the encouragement of the Ordinary and the approbation of the pastor. Father Fichter's ten researchers had not been at their task for long, however, when the pastor began to be alarmed by the facts revealed. It might be speculated that the selection of his parish was taken by him to be something of a compliment to his work and that he anticipated that the study would reveal the excellent state of his domain. It soon became evident, however, that such was not to be the case.

It is probably fortunate that the researchers were allowed to conclude their study at all. During the course of their work, Father Fichter became *persona non grata* to the parish, having added straw to the camel's back with pulpit declarations on racial issues. The pertinent result was that when Father Fichter offered to review the material of his first volume with the pastor for the latter's corrections and suggestions, a thing which he was by no means obliged to do, the pastor refused to meet with him.

Father Fichter submitted his manuscript to the Ordinary of the diocese, and received a letter of commendation from him. However, in an effort to use every means possible to preserve the anonymity of the locale, he sought his Imprimatur from the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago and dedicated his work to the Bishop of Covington, Kentucky.

It was a well known fact prior to the publication of the first volume that the pastor of "St. Mary's" was deeply aggrieved. This was to be expected, for one could not be expected to take calmly the revelation that his daughter was suffering from pernicious anemia. The pastor apparently did not consider in his own favor that a study of any other parish in the Archdiocese would have uncovered substantially the same facts and that if the book was going to prove one thing it was that no pastor, aided by only two assistants, could possibly meet the spiritual needs of so large a flock.

When Volume 1 was published, the pastor was ready for action. He suggested the names of three clerics to the Ordinary, who would form a committee for the review of the book. One of the committee members was an official of the matrimonial court, another a professor of Scripture and the third an urban pastor. Despite their lack of qualification to judge a sociological work, they reviewed the book and issued a public statement. The statement was published in the secular press, apparently at someone's urging, since presented coldly, without background, it was about as newsworthy as last week's bingo. The text also appeared in full in the diocesan newspaper.

The committee found *Southern Parish* marred by error and inaccuracy and replete with "inappropriate reporting." It listed seven separate errors, such as the fact that the National Shrine Collection at "St. Mary's" in 1948 was said to be $258.00, when actually it was a "far better sum of $711.03." It is interesting to note against the committee's statement that the book has "not much pastoral usefulness," that Father Reinhold in his review described the book as a "must for reading and discussion among the clergy, seminarians and lay leaders." The Committee felt that there were "too many indications and passages in the book by which the parish under study can be identified."

★

NEEDLESS TO SAY, *Southern Parish* is not beyond criticism. For example, the author states that those Catholics classified as "dormant Catholics" were only an indirect responsibility of the priest. Such a phrase certainly needs qualification. However, it would be a remarkable sociological work indeed that was not open to challenge on more than one specific point. The committee, however, challenged the validity of the entire work on the basis of the canonical and reporting mistakes it painfully isolated.

The controversy over the book helped its sales tremendously in New Orleans. It quickly sold 100 copies, a phenomenal number for a work of this sort. People began to ask about and to order the second volume. It was then that the sorry fact of its suppression came to light.

The pastor of "St. Mary's," who has taken the work as a personal affront despite the fact that Father Fichter in his first volume manifestly and consciously goes out of his way to point up every positive factor he could find, had condescended to review the manuscript of the second volume and protested vigorously against its publication. The Ordinary of the diocese, a great prelate who has seen to the shouting of the Church's social and racial doctrines from the housetops, was in a difficult position. Because of the Archbishop's failing eyesight, the book must have had to be read to him; hence, he was not able to give it the careful study that he undoubtedly felt it deserved. He had the advice and recommendations of his committee on the one side and only the interested pleadings of the author on the other. The author's religious

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superiors apparently failed to give him and his work the support that might have swung the issue. It should be mentioned as pertinent at this point, that Father Fichter is a man who is intensely admired or severely criticized by laity and clergy, because of his efforts after racial justice in conservative New Orleans.

The deciding factor in the decision has been reliably reported. The pastor's activities have been limited for a number of years by a heart ailment. Since he was so deeply disturbed by the publication of the first volume and had raised such strenuous objections to the issuing of the remaining volumes, it was decided to halt their publication out of respect for his health. In other words, the possibility of his being ill-affected was put in the balance against the probability of Catholic sociology's gaining a great contribution and an important stimulus, and the former carried the greater weight.

Unless the Ordinary of the Diocese should re-open and force the issue, it can be presumed to be closed. However, many interested priests and laymen, such as the members of the progressive Catholic Committee of the South who drafted a resolution of commendation of *Southern Parish* when it first appeared, still cling to the hope that the Archbishop will see to the publication of the suppressed volumes.

At the end of its review,*Books on Trial* said, "When the remaining three volumes of this series will be completed, American Catholicism will have its first scientific and scholarly analysis of its failures and successes."

This is to report that American Catholicism may have to look elsewhere for this much needed revelation.

An Appeal

Rev. Aloysius Ravalico, S.D.B., procurator of the Salesian missions in Madras, India, tells how Christmas there is a public holiday on which Hindus and Moslems send their Christian friends good wishes. This Christmas will be a difficult one. "The monsoon has failed for four consecutive years in southeast India. One of the worst hit areas is North Arcot where the Salesian Fathers have 60,000 converts; with few exceptions these all belong to the landless parisah class."

The Salesians care for nearly three thousand destitute children in their orphanages in the city of Madras and the North Arcot district. American contributions for these orphanages or the hard-pressed people in these mission areas may be sent to:

Rev. James O'Loughlen
Salesian Missions
148 Main St.
New Rochelle, N. Y.

Don Luigi Sturzo: a Memoir

By H. A. REINHOLD

FOR about three months in 1935 I sought refuge in London. Exactly six years to the day after I had been charged with building up a Catholic Seamen's Apostolate for Germany, the Gestapo expelled me from the coastal areas and threatened to arrest me as "subversive." I took counsel with Jesuit friends in Muenster, and we decided that I should leave the country, since it was no longer open to my apostolate, and go abroad to make a new start, at least until it became clear what was really going on. The International Secretary, Arthur Gannon, and his wife received me like their own flesh and blood in Ascot and, after a while, the Bishop of Southwark accepted me for substitute parish work while the pastor of Kingston-on-Thames went on a vacation.

These were tense and unhappy months. I was inclined to be bitter for reasons better not discussed now. The greatest blows my land of refuge, known as the classical land of refuge for all exiles, dealt me were the naval treaty its government made with the Nazis—a terrible moral setback for all who had stood up to the Nazis and paid for it—and the sudden flurry of veterans' meetings sponsored by the Prince of Wales. Democratic Germany had gone down in shame, blood and indignity and now the world saw the brazen criminals around Hitler waste the moral and economic capital stored up in the short period of a dozen years. No Prince had thought it worth his time to give the resentful veterans of the Kaiser, smarting under the moral ostracism of the world, a friendly hand during the years the bumbling and hapless men of the Weimar Republic believed they were in power. But now that the unspeakable Fuehrer had thumped the conference tables of the world with his fist and had screamed at demure and genteel visitors in his show places, the heir of Britain's crown met the veterans picked by scoundrels and talked across the lines, with the lack of interest so common among his kind in those days when peers of the realm graced the Nuremberg rallies of the rabble.

The only excuse I can find for such goings-on are the wishful thinking the free world then in-

REV. H. A. REINHOLD, pastor of St. Joseph's, Sunnyside, Washington, is a leader in the Liturgical Movement.

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dulged in and its innate decency—it could not bring itself to believe the reports of the victims of Nazism, just as the later documentary evidence of Dachau was brushed aside by many as "propaganda." This kind of blindness we all tend toward individually when unpleasant realities appear, but I could not see why the leaders of free people should affect such an attitude.

Add to these political concerns certain personal annoyances: poverty such as I had never experienced before, the dependence on alms—though they were most generous and sufficient. The authorities of Southwark would not take my lay host's word for it that I was a bona fide refugee—only Jews and Communists were supposed to run into trouble with Himmler and his ilk—so they called on the pastor of the German Church on Adler Street in the East End, who, like so many bewildered employees of the half ecclesiastical, half national organization he served, did not exactly help me, to say the least. It was a confused world.

★

I USED to visit the former German chancellor on rare occasions, to receive his advice and hear the latest rumors about home. He lived with Scottish friends on Portman Square, surrounded by undercover agents and spied upon, but protected by Scotland Yard. As he, once hailed by Catholic leaders as "the greatest statesman since Bismarck," had been dropped and shunned the moment the political wind came from another direction, we had a great deal in common. He was more charitable in many ways than I, but there were issues which filled him with genuine anxiety over the future of Christianity, for he was fully aware of the fact that if Hitler succeeded, certainly, but even if he failed, an age of anxiety awaited all Christians.

When he saw my distress and heard that none of those who should have been my brothers was interested in even listening to me, he brought up the name of Luigi Sturzo. Don Sturzo was already a legend. The actual words of Dr. Bruening escape my memory now, after sixteen event-packed years, but I know it was Dr. Bruening who sent me to Don Sturzo. Of course, I had heard of the priest who founded the Italian Popolari with the blessing of Benedict XV. I knew vaguely that he had been dropped when it was clear the Duce had come to stay and the murder of Matteotti by Mussolini's stooges made opposition unhealthy in the new Italy whose trains ran on time. My kind mentor also added that Don Sturzo had lived in poverty in London for many years, supported by a few devoted English laymen, and that official Catholicism ignored him, perhaps following a tip-off from the new regime in Rome, where retaliation was rife. Don Sturzo was tolerated and allowed to live as priest, if he kept quiet, but he was not allowed to enjoy the glory of witnessing to Christian liberty.

The great German Christian statesman made the connection, and I found my way to a quiet district west of Kensington Gardens. The house was one in a long row of respectable but now shabby four-story structures, all narrow chested, clean and monotonous examples of the conventional, drab architecture of the late 'eighties. A distinguished looking lady—was she his host or his landlady?—ushered me into a shadowy room lined with book cases and piled high with newspapers. The frail and ethereal priest sat wrapped in blankets, against the dull, damp London spring, in a chair that could have held three Don Sturzos.

Benedict XV risen again! That was my first impression. The same noble head, aquiline nose, the wise and tired eyes, the grace of the priest's greeting and his beautiful, rich voice. His desk, covered with manuscripts, was a little sewing table. His bed, a sort of cot, was behind a small screen. It was a pathetic sight, humanly speaking, for a meeting with history. Don Luigi, I knew and I felt more, was one of history's great.

In those days my Italian, acquired as a boy, improved by numerous sojourns in Italy, was not quite as rusty and mixed up with little bits of Spanish as it is now. Over cups of thin English tea we became friends. I was elated: here was I, a young priest, with nothing to his name that would appear in history books or on library shelves, and there the incarnate spirit of Italian sanctity, a Christian in clerical garb—the first one I ever met, I felt.

There was no complaint from Don Luigi about the stupid reception given by those who should have carried him in triumph as a witness. The ingratitude of those who used him while he was a good tool and who dropped him and looked the other way when he became an embarrassment was shrugged off with wise charity. No cynicism, no bitterness, no disappointment—only firmness and hope. He looked forward to the day when tyrants would be dead and tyrannies, when mentioned, would be humiliating memories to those who countenanced them and made deals with them. He was not going to gloat over them, I knew. While all over the world his fellow Catholics bartered and bargained with evil men to save what they could, Luigi Sturzo simply looked on, sure that this was what usually happens—the wise son of Sicily and Rome whose mind was schooled by examples like Gregory VII and Pius VII, and in whose veins ran the blood of a people that had seen Greeks, Phoenicians, Normans, Arabs, Spaniards and Italians dominating and then disappearing.

There was nothing of the cold Olympian in

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him. He was no Santayana, smiling from lofty heights at the foolish doings of little, inferior men. Don Luigi suffered with his sister in Italy, with the Italians who resented their strutting Caesar, with his fellow priests who felt shame but stayed on with their flock. His silence even spoke forgiveness for his hosts with their lack of understanding. There was no white horse in his stable on which he would ride back to Rome; rather he feared the price that would have to be paid before he could return.

When I, young as I was, said a few impatient things, he did not rebuke me. I knew that his patience was the fruit of struggle and not smug implacability. I thought then of some great gesture, like Don Sturzo's being made Cardinal and residing in the Vatican, an ever-present symbol of Christian freedom over the grave of Saint Peter. But I learned to understand that the Rev. Luigi Sturzo in Bayswater, near Notting Hill, poor, ignored, pouring out books that were less events in their field than a re-examination of his position, was a far more formidable threat than Luigi Cardinal Sturzo could ever be. I have never tried to copy him, because I knew the difference in scale and proportion, but in the face of so much utter incomprehension of fascism, the witness in London was a tower of strength to me.

★

I HAD three proud occasions to help him. First was when I wangled an invitation for him from the Swiss Abbot of Einsiedeln at his priory in the Ticino so that Don Sturzo could spend a few weeks with his beloved sister on Swiss-Italian ground among palms, olive trees and vineyards. He was deeply grateful. I still take off my hat to the great abbot, because even in Switzerland it was ecclesiastical style to tiptoe around the house in order not to awaken the sleeping furies of Hitler or Mussolini.

The second chance to show my admiration was when Don Sturzo, during the great Blitz, asked me to take care of his unpublished manuscripts in far-away Seattle. Later, when he was in Florida, I returned them to him, and I hope they have all been published.

The third chance came after an Italian physician carried the weary and spent man on his strong back onto an evacuation ship and into the city of Brooklyn, where loyal and trusty friends, natives of Sicily, gave him room and board. What made me think that he was all right, I don't know. But it took a good scolding from Dorothy Day and all the plasticity of Brooklynese at the sovereign command of Don Sturzo's friend, Joe Calderon, before I called on him, in 1941, somewhere within shouting distance of Coney Island. It must have been my rusty Italian, the impression that he was in good hands and too famous to suffer his London fate that held me back. When I saw my mistake, the COMMONWEAL staff was alerted and soon after a group of responsible Catholics had him down in the sunshine and mild sea breezes of Florida.

The last time I saw Don Sturzo, he was the center of a great flurry of activity. I ran into Count Sforza and Herbert Matthews on the stairs to his room in Brooklyn. He was, so to speak, sitting on his trunks, frail as ever, spiritual and serene as ever, but with a grasp of Italy's needs that made Italians come to him for enlightenment.

Later there were a few letters from his secretary in Rome, a few letters telling me that he had given the CARE parcels which I meant for him, to the poor, to children and orphans.

Don Luigi Sturzo's name and person have sounded like a beautiful, pure chord through the grating dissonances of my life as a fellow exile. One could say we had little in common. I fell in love with America, while he regarded her as a gracious and generous hostess; the blunt and irascible German never even tried to achieve the serene calm of the greatest contemporary Italian. I had hopes, when he returned, to see him "suffer" the same honor given John Henry Newman, by becoming Luigi Cardinal Sturzo; as a matter of fact, I brazenly plugged for it in *Orate Fratres*.

If he ever read or heard about it, he probably sighed and smiled. It would have been a gesture according to my heart, but I have resigned myself to seeing him enter, not the Sacred College of Cardinals, but the company of noble Christian statesmen and priests, like the great Gregorys, Piuses and others—a column and anchor to us lesser contemporaries.

An Appeal

Dr. Karl Stern, author of *Pillar of Fire,* appeals for aid for a French students' settlement, *Eau vive* (Living Waters) which Father Thomas Philippe, O.P., conducts near Paris. "Male and female students of the universities of Paris and of the nearby seminary of the Dominican Fathers live in a cooperative community. The farm work is done by the students themselves, the cooking and washing by the girl students.

"The liturgical life forms the center of the existence of these young laymen, but the settlement is interdenominational. Last summer I met there a young Lutheran from Norway and a Confucian from China. Perhaps the most interesting group is one of Arab-Christian students. Not self-supporting, this settlement depends to a large extent on gifts. It is one of the most encouraging symptoms a European visitor can see today. It should be supported in every possible way." Donations should be sent to: Rev. Père Thomas Philippe, O.P., care of *Eau Vive,* Soisy-sur-Seine, France.

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SO THEY TELL ME

The Irgun Revolt

WHAT for a long time had been a faltering hope and a debated aspiration became, between 1944 and 1947, "a military uprising against British rule." It was a revolt, a movement for "liberation," the purpose of which was to establish a Jewish state. In the nature of things war was made first on the British, and later on the Arabs. The British White Paper, of 1939, had, among other things, given the Arabs a veto over Jewish immigration into the "homeland." The Arabs, it was expected, would ultimately prevent the establishment of a Jewish state, the British would not allow the creation of an Arab state. Palestine would remain a place on earth subject to British mandate. It was in spite of these arrangements that the state of Israel was created. It was created largely by force.

Of the military uprising which created Israel no history has yet been written. But Mr. Menachem Begin has now written the story of one of the leading groups which brought Israel into existence (*The Revolt of the Irgun. Schuman.* $4.). He quotes, naturally enough, the conclusion of an American rabbi, Dr. Hillel Silver, that "the Irgun will go down in history as a factor without which the State of Israel would not have come into being."

In many ways, Mr. Begin's is a difficult story. For one thing there is his way of telling it. Even those used to Conrad's shuttling method of weaving a narrative will be confused by Mr. Begin. Not only does he take for granted familiarity with his country's history, he makes his own narrative move like a harassed climber up an ice-filled hill. For the climber such unstraight procedure is compulsory; in Mr. Begin's case it is unnecessarily confusing. He impedes mental progress.

Then there is his vocabulary—or the vocabulary of his translator. He speaks of the Irgun "boys" so frequently and in such a way as to irritate. He speaks of freedom, of the desire for freedom, existing in "Jewish blood" as if it knew home in no other blood. He speaks of a difference of opinion, among Jews themselves, as a "sacred dispute." He speaks of Irgun leaflets as "sacred packages." He speaks of "the little band of Irgun fighters" as displaying, at Jaffa, "a brave and lofty grandeur of spirit, unsurpassed, I venture to claim, in the whole story of human valour."

There is, besides, a welter of moralizing, a kind of theology of precarious logic which is almost casuistry, a kind of talmudic thing designed to persuade and remaining, somehow, unpersuasive. It is a thing, perhaps, which arises out of sensitivity to attack which has been made, and which is being anticipated.

Mention Mr. Begin's name, as I have done to many people, to many Jewish people, and they, rightly, identify him with Vladimir Jabotinsky. The latter they will tell you was a "Fascist," and Mr. Begin is a "Fascist." The Irgun, they say, was a "terrorist" organization. The difference between it and the Stern group they find almost too small to measure. The fact is, and Mr. Begin admits this, that the Irgun cooperated with the Stern "gang," and if the latter had any moral scruples, they have been kept secret from me.

★

WHETHER or not Mr. Begin is a "Fascist," I do not know. He is aware, however, that his organization—he was known as the Commander of the Irgun—was, and is, regarded as terroristic. Of that charge he has this to say:

> The underground fighters of the Irgun arose to overthrow and replace a regime. We used physical force because we were faced by physical force. But physical force was neither our aim nor our creed. We believed in the supremacy of moral forces. It was our enemy who mocked at them. That is why, notwithstanding the enemy's tremendous preponderance in physical strength, he it was who was defeated, and not we. That is the law of history. We rejoiced at the opportunity to try to prove that this law operated. . . . We were thankful that we were able to prove, not only for our own people, but for humanity as a whole. . . . But historically we were not 'terrorists.' We were strictly speaking anti-terrorists. (Page 60).

I realize that it is unfair generally to break a quotation, as I here have done. But one who reads it all will, I think, discover that to Mr. Begin's argument I have done no violence. His argument has been anticipated by many, and they remain unpersuaded by it.

But his is an argument difficult to deal with. The temptation to kill in a cause you think is morally good—Mr. Begin is at all times full of righteousness—is almost an overpowering one. The power of the human mind to justify itself is almost limitless. Some examples will aid the process of clarification.

The British made a rule that carrying arms was illegal. For breaking these Emergency Regulations two Irgunists were sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment by a military court. "But," writes Mr. Begin, "the 'sentence' was rounded off by the educational addition of eighteen lashes for each of the boys." The Irgun sent an order to all of its regional commanders to catch British officers "and prove to them that if 'whip education' was good for Hebrew soldiers it was good for British officers as well." Mr. Begin regards this retaliation as a "service to human self-respect." I regard it as an exercise in deliberate and wanton brutality. So to hold it is not to condone the British practice; but a better mind than mine long ago knew that the hand becomes subdued to what it works in.

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In rationalizing his act Mr. Begin, it seems to me, engages in a peculiar kind of sense of place and of race. At the time of these floggings the Irgunists publicly observed to the British: "For hundreds of years you have been whipping 'natives' in your colonies—without retaliation. In your foolish pride you regard the Jews in Eretz Israel as natives too. You are mistaken. Zion is not exile. *Jews are not Zulus.*" (Italics mine).

When the British captured Irgun raiders they tried them, and, often, hanged them. The Irgun promised "to answer gallows with gallows."

What lay behind all this, the Irgun warning to the British that "execution of prisoners of war is premeditated murder," was that the Irgun was an underground movement engaging, largely, in secret and running raids on armories and trains and offices and hotel headquarters, and they wanted legal recognition. Mr. Begin puts it this way: "But it was clear to us, as it should have been clear to the British Government from the day of our declaration in 1944, that we would fight by every means in our power to win recognition as an underground army, and that should the British disregard our incessant warnings and hang any of our men whom they took prisoners—their prisoners in our hands should also hang." Mr. Begin, who everywhere in his book is almost grossly concerned in proving his morality, in that sentence means what he says: "by every means in our power." His means had, long since, become subordinated to his ends; and the end here is recognition and legality.

At this point, I observe what I ought to have noted much earlier. Only one review of Mr. Begin's book has appeared in the ordinary places in which books are reviewed. The *Herald Tribune* printed a review by Mr. Gerald Frank on October 14. My own underground tells me that this is not an accident. There is, I am told, a kind of gentleman's agreement about this book. It is, as it were, whispered about that if the book is not mentioned it will not be read, and no trouble will be provoked. I do not know that this is so. I hope that those who are attacked in this book have not resorted to private censorship. I hope that those who regard Mr. Begin as a "Fascist" have enough regard for democratic principles, enough faith in democratic practice, in the competition of ideas in the market place, not to try to excommunicate Mr. Begin by a discreet conspiracy of silence. Else they are pretentious and have little faith in themselves. Perhaps they find their past indefensible. As I said, I hope none of this is true, and that it is only curious.

★

IN HIS *Closing the Ring* Mr. Churchill writes: "The Greeks rival the Jews in being the most politically minded race in the world. No matter how forlorn their circumstances or how grave the peril to their country, they are always divided into many parties, with many leaders who fight among themselves with desperate vigor. It has been well said that wherever there are three Jews it will be found that there are two Prime Ministers and one leader of the Opposition." (P. 532.)

I am reminded of this because, in a sense, Mr. Begin's book is a defense of himself and of his group. He is now a leading member of an opposition group—the Herut—in Israel's parliament. He and his party stand now, as they did from the beginning, for the "liberation" of the entire national territory of Eretz Israel. Whether or not Mr. Ben Gurion returns the fight, Mr. Begin, both as author and politician, reminds us that, as Churchill says, the Jews go on "quarrelling among themselves with insatiable vivacity."

The quarrel set in at the outset of what Churchill, in another place, has called the "squalid warfare in Palestine." If Mr. Begin is correct, if he is telling the truth, the attitude of Ben Gurion, of the Jewish Agency, of the Haganah, to both Begin and the Irgun was a morally ambivalent one. When, for example, the Irgun was engaged in taking Jaffa, Jewish papers spoke of their work as abortive and barren. The Haganah claimed that the attack was motivated wholly by politics. "Was not this," asks Mr. Begin, "yet another example of the shameful 'self-hatred' that has plagued us Jews ever since we were exiled from our country nearly two thousand years ago?"

Mr. Begin speaks constantly of the "innocence" and of the "petty illusions" of the leaders of the Jewish Agency. He writes that the leaders of the Haganah "always had an inferiority complex about the British." He holds that they and the Irgun were always talking "at cross purposes," and that what is involved is "a difference in spiritual climate."

According to Mr. Begin the official Jewish leaders were "pathetically blind" in their reading of the British elections of 1945. They regarded Attlee and company as friends, while the Irgun knew that they were not. That the Irgun was correct in its political estimate is now known to everyone. Jewish Agency leaders, who had denounced the Irgun, wanted a united front when "Bevin opened his mouth; and the world tumbled about the ears of the credulous. That Midsummer Night's Dream vanished. No Labor promise, no Blackpool resolution, no friendship. All that remained was the traditional British fist, and facing us was Bevin whose dislike for the Jews was already a legend."

The fact is that even when they were allies the relationship between the official Jewish leaders and the Irgun was an uneasy one. For all his moralizing Mr. Begin entered into alliance with the Stern group. He at no point condemns them for what even the friendliest of men regard as simple terrorism. He never disparages them. He speaks of them as "comrades in revolt."

The Jewish Agency and the Haganah officially condemned violence. From Mr. Begin's standpoint Ben Gurion was only "playing at war." It is his contention that Ben Gurion's practices would never have defeated the British and that today there would be no Israel. It is his contention that when the official leaders needed the Irgun they allied themselves with it. When they did not they cast off the Irgun and even betrayed it. I am going to stop using the phrase, "If Mr. Begin tells the truth." If he does not his opponents are required to reply to him, to repudiate his arguments, and to prove that his documentation is forgery.

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All But Half Way

During World War II The Commonweal was held by the paper ration to an average printing of 11,400 copies per week. During the past five years the number has varied between 12,000 and 14,000, with the apex being reached each Easter. This week The Commonweal is printing 16,000 copies.

That is one indication how well the "Operation Survival" subscription drive is going. In less than two months the circulation level has been raised materially; to reach the vital goal of 4500 new long-term subscriptions by January we now have 2321 subscriptions to go. Much hangs on the response to the letter suggesting Commonweal subscriptions for Christmas which goes out this week.

And if we reach this higher subscription level and maintain it, the ideas which The Commonweal consistently advocates will attain that much wider currency.

HE CITES Richard Crossman as saying in the House of Commons that the Jewish Agency and the Haganah "handed over a list of 1,500 names of members of the Irgun Zvai Leumi to the British authorities." He believes that 1,500 is too high, but not much too high. He writes that "if the Jewish Agency obeyed the British, and the Irgun obeyed the Agency the rule of the High Commissioner might continue forever."

He claims that in the "Altalena" affair that it was the Provisional Government which brought the arms-ship in, and that it was the Government that fired on it, enflamed it, destroyed its arms—so needed by the Jews—and made the ship "the common grave of a number of brave men."

Yet if the official leaders were willing on occasion to work with Begin, he was willing to work with them. Nonetheless he cites Crossman again as writing of Ben Gurion: "He seems to want to have it both ways, to remain within the letter of the law as chairman of the Agency, and to tolerate terror as a method of bringing pressure on the Administration. That's a doubtful policy. The Irish leaders made up their minds and went underground. . . . I wonder whether Ben Gurion wouldn't be wiser to do the same or to accept the lead of Weizmann and the moderates who really and genuinely regard the use of force as a mistake."

The political portrait of Ben Gurion is incised little by little. It is built slowly, but it is a new portrait, at least for me. To put it at its kindliest it is the portrait of an extraordinarily complicated man.

There remains Dir Yassin. This town was captured by the Irgun with "the knowledge of the Haganah and with the approval of its Commander." Warning was given according to Begin to its civilian inhabitants to leave their houses. Begin speaks of this as a "humane warning." As he puts it, "the civilians who had disregarded our warnings, suffered inevitable casualties." It would seem that some 200 aged, women and children were killed. The Agency apologized to Abdullah. Ben Gurion spoke of him, correctly it would now seem, as "the wise ruler who seeks the good of his people and this country." All informed Jews whom I know speak, sadly or angrily, of Dir Yassen as a massacre, needless and cruel. "But those who throw stones of denunciation at the conquerors of Dir Yassin," writes Mr. Begin, "would do well not to don the cloak of hypocrisy."

States, like other institutions, are often the product of passions so intense that men have risked their lives for their creation. So it was in Israel. The contest between the British and the Jews was clearly a squalid contest: there was no need to submit it to the arbitrament of force. The conduct of Ernest Bevin was clearly indefensible. But that men are provoked to wrong by wrong so gross that the Irgun could accept the Stern group is a rationalization which Mr. Begin makes and one which I am unwilling to accept. The conduct of the Agency and of the Haganah in repudiating the Irgun with one hand and welcoming it with the other is such that I should think Israel must always taste its ash when it is tempted to savor its glory.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

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The Stage

PAINT YOUR WAGON

"PAINT Your Wagon" is what you might call a virtuous musical. It is accurate in its backgrounds, sincere in its characterization, careful in its plotting. And it is, I am afraid, dull. Musical comedy has more license left to it than our other contemporary, and relentlessly realistic forms: it is free to stylize, to work in caricature, to cut loose with implausible but invigorating nonsense. And it is a shame to barter these things away in exchange for a solemn sincerity.

Alan Jay Lerner, who wrote book and lyrics, and Frederick Loewe, who did the music, earlier offered us "Brigadoon." They were shy on comedy in that one, too, but there they were dealing with fantasy, and the successful establishment of a mood was enough for an engaging evening. This time, however, they are concerned with materials which are both more familiar—the scene is the California gold rush—and, by their nature, more robust. Comic invention is wanted if we are to go over this ground again, but all we are given are some news-notes of the period, rather literally dramatized and rather plainly sung. Nor does the honesty of approach generate much in the way of feeling: Agnes de Mille's dances whip up more emotional intensity in five minutes than the book does in two hours—illustrating pretty patly the fact that the virtues of this kind of theatre are formal and unrealistic.

James Barton has some amusing and some mildly touching moments in the role of an old miner, Olga San Juan is a welcome addition to the ranks of musical stage ingenues, and Gemze de Lappe is a real find as the principal dancer—one of the most exciting of Miss de Mille's usually exciting ballerinas. Miss de Lappe is ably assisted by James Mitchell, and the two of them give the occasion whatever fire it has.

Some of the music is nice enough—you will probably be hearing "Another Autumn" and "I Still See Elisa"—but it is at its best in its quieter moods. So is Daniel Mann's stage direction. When Mr. Mann takes time out to create a sense of growing desolation as a boom town becomes a ghost town, he is sensitive and sure. But such moments do not make a thriving musical, and there is too little compensation when things should be at their liveliest. (*At the Shubert*)

DINOSAUR WHARF

JOEL WYMAN'S first produced play is something of a finger exercise in dramatic organization. Everything is in its proper place—hero, heroine, struggle, background—but for all the innate vitality these things have they might have been written by a typewriter rather than by a man. The play comes across like an echo—precise in every inflection, and utterly hollow.

ADVENT

by Jean Danielou, S.J.

"Pere Danielou's book deals not with the Liturgical season, but with the advent of Christ to the nations and to individual souls. . . . To read this makes one feel that he has walked out of a house into the world . . . no review could do it justice."—Frederick A. Harkins, S.J., in *America.*

". . . opens up a new world of thought and action to those of us who perhaps have dwelt too long on the chaos of our own times without a Christian perspective of history."—James F. Kittleson in *The Commonweal.*

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by Helen Caldwell Day

"You will probably agree that it is among the most engrossing and inspiring life-stories you have ever taken up. . . . As a story of conversion it has its special and inimitably appealing character. As a picture of the melancholy fact of injustice to the Negro, it is graphic without being sensational, and it is constructive in its indication of how Catholicism can heal a scandalous sore."—John S. Kennedy.

"At a time when just about everything has been said on the theoretical plane about racism that needs to be said, Mrs. Day does not simply teach; her experience moves or shows."—*The Commonweal.* $2.25

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Both these books are reviewed in the Christmas number of Sheed & Ward's OWN TRUMPET. If you don't see it, ask Lucy MacGill to send you a copy, free and postpaid.

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Mr. Wyman has thus far learned his craft by rote. He knows that his principal figures must be at odds, and he knows how to illustrate the odds they are at. In this case, he opposes a girl who loathes violence to a man who finds violence the only weapon available in the course of a dirty union struggle on the docks. But the girl's attitude is formal, theoretical, and emotionally empty; she is full of phrases and no real fear. And the violence in which the boy must engage is a contrived one, worked out like an equation.

The contriving is old-fashioned as well. Throughout the evening people are listening at keyholes, peeping through curtains, lurking behind barrels on the wharf. These are the gestures of drama, without personal urgency or any sense of the flesh at work; and they are made to seem even more remote by the curiously dim and muted stage direction of producer Therese Hayden.

James Gregory, as the villain of the piece, does a great deal to soften and partly obscure the blatant writing of his role—his is by far the best performance of the evening—but Lois Wheeler, as the whimpering heroine, walks right into the trap set by the author. She plays the hollow heroics at full-scale, and the wind in the wings is terrific. (*Closed at the National*)

WALTER KERR

The Screen

BREATHLESS, BREATHLESS, ALL THE WAY

YOU are likely to be exhausted when you come to the end of *"The Clouded Yellow,"* but you'll admit you've been on a very exciting chase. When English movie makers put their minds to it, they can make chase thrillers that are in a class by themselves. In spite of its flaws (you guess the solution too soon and the chase itself is too long) "The Clouded Yellow" is distinctly one of the better chase thrillers and among its assets are a good cast, an intelligent script, some fine photography and direction that heightens the suspense even when you're ahead of the story.

The fuss starts when Trevor Howard, portraying an English Secret Service agent who specializes in getting refugees out of Europe, loses his job for making a mistake. So he takes a new and different job—a nice quiet job cataloguing butterflies, with a nice quiet family, in a nice quiet English place in the country. All those nices and quiets prove misleading: the family is more than a little strange, with butterfly collector Barry Jones and his wife, Sonia Dresdel, acting suspiciously unquiet and un-nice from the start, and their niece, Jean Simmons, acting just too fey for words; and the place is by no means quiet when the over-sexed handyman, Maxwell Reed, begins acting up and then is suddenly killed off one quiet night; and the job soon loses its quiet aspects (although the butterfly cataloguing has started and the film's title turns out to be the name of one of the butter-

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flies) when our ex-secret service man decides that the niece is being mistreated and is certainly not guilty of murdering the handyman as everyone else, including the police, seems to suspect. So, Howard Trevor (who knows, mind you, at least half the secrets of the English counter-esponiage) helps the girl escape; and the couple soon becomes the hunted in a pursuit that involves the Secret Service (who are chasing Trevor), the family (who want to continue their diabolic schemes against the girl), and the police (who hope to catch the murderer).

"The Clouded Yellow" may not be the best chase picture ever made, but it certainly has some of the most exciting scenery ever used in a thriller. London, Liverpool, Newcastle Shipyards, and the Lake District complete with rooftops, back alleys, water falls and rocky crags provide the backgrounds. There's nothing like a good breathless run through Great Britain to make you forget your own troubles for a while.

★

THERE are also some good moments of suspense in *"No Highway in the Sky,"* an American picture most of which was filmed in England, especially in the long airplane ride during which an erratic scientist (James Stewart) informs one of the passengers (Marlene Dietrich) and the air-hostess (Glynis Johns) that the tail of the plane will soon snap, after which, of course, all will be lost. However, most of this picture, with its script stemming from a novel by Nevil Shute, is concerned with the scientist's proving his theories, and since Stewart plays the role in an overly cute absent-minded-professor fashion, the effect is rather on the coy side. The girls turn in brilliant performances: although Dietrich's role is not large, she makes the most of it and portrays a famous movie actress in her best style; and Glynis Johns is both likable and lovable as the hostess.

★

SINCE it comes from Harold Lamb's book about Genghis Khan, *"The Golden Horde"* should have been better than most, but alas it is only an oversized spectacle in Technicolor, and the talents of its good cast, headed by David Farrar and Ann Blyth, are hidden in too many folds of brocaded costumes. The plot has to do with the advance armies of Genghis Khan marching on the capital of Persia, where the beautiful Princess Shalimar (Ann Blyth looking as lovely as the perfume smells) waits for them and hopes to persuade them not to destroy the city. The English, who are always butting in, have loaned their Sir Guy (Farrar) to act as ambassador of various western kings and to warn the Tartars and various other warring tribes to stay out of this territory. The action includes a large number of battle scenes, and there is much talk about dying for the cause —but I was always a little vague about what cause, and, in fact, about the whole plot. The Princess somehow turns out to be awfully smart and seems to prove although, I don't know how, that what's sauce for the Tartar is sauce for the Khan.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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Books

The General and the President. Richard H. Rovere and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Farrar, Straus & Young. $3.75.

AUTHORS Rovere and Schlesinger have done a masterful piece of work in their appraisal of General Douglas MacArthur, their analysis of the events leading up to his historic dismissal last April 11, and their appreciative elucidation of U. S. foreign policy under the Truman administration. This collaborative achievement is all the more remarkable considering the brief elapsed time since the conclusion of the Senate inquiry into the MacArthur recall and the present publication.

The first 95 pages of this book are devoted to "The General and His Legend." Not only do Rovere and Schlesinger shatter the MacArthur myth, they are diligent enough to explain how the myth was created. How "he began to fancy himself a master of Oriental psychology, the logic of the Japanese mind;" how "those around him systematically confirmed his impression that he was the only American who understood Asia;" how he carefully 'managed' the press throughout World War II, until at the end the American people had come to believe that MacArthur was not only the omniscient Occidental in the Orient but also the omnipresent general who called his signals, carried the ball, passed, punted and did his own blocking until the final whistle blew in Tokyo Bay.

Except for an occasional lapse into *ad hominem* thrusts, the authors confine themselves to the relevant MacArthur weaknesses. The MacArthur myth, left intact, would have been harmless enough had the North Korean aggression never taken place. But as the authors remark, and patiently demonstrate, "MacArthur's forecasts have been almost uniformly wrong: the invasion of South Korea startled him as much as the Japanese attack on the Philippines in 1941."

"This particular lack of prescience," remark the authors, "was shared, God knows, by many others, and it would hardly matter today if so many things in our present situation did not hinge on estimates of the probability of aggression."

At the Wake Island conference with Mr. Truman, the General was asked to make another forecast.

"'What are the chances for Chinese or Soviet interference?'" inquired the President.

"'Very little,'" replied the master of Oriental psychology. "'If the Chinese tried to get down to Pyongyang there would be the greatest slaughter . . .'"

Six weeks later, the General began his ill-starred home-by-Christmas campaign which ended in a reeling retreat as the Chinese soldiers poured down from Manchuria.

Then, as the Senate hearings made abundantly clear, General MacArthur argued for his insubordinate behavior with one last forecast: that enlargement of the Korean war would not necessarily bring on World War III. But even if MacArthur's past record as a prophetic master of the Oriental mind had been reassuring (which, of course, it was not) Mr. Truman had no other choice but to relieve the man who was challenging Constitutional authority, spreading grievous disunity at home and threatening to strip us of our allies and bring down the house of collective security in its first dramatic test at the hands of Communist aggression.

During the Senate hearings, as Rovere and Schlesinger show, the General revealed how pitifully slender was his understanding of the global nature of the Communist-free world struggle and the part—important, but still only a part—which Korea played in it. For General Omar Bradley, "Korea was 'just one engagement, just one phase' of a continuing battle; for MacArthur it was the pay-off." Indeed, the General professed the greatest unconcern and impatience to even discuss with Senator Brien McMahon the nature of collective security. And for the US policy of limited and localized war he had only an epithet: "appeasement." And for the real source and brains of the free world's antagonist, for MacArthur it was not Soviet Russia, but Communism wherever and whenever it arose.

The authors spend considerable time examining our Far East policy during the war and in the six postwar years and marshal imposing testimony that we exhausted just about every possibility in an attempt to bolster and stabilize Chiang's government. They conclude that Chiang's political and social disabilities, dating from before the war, planted the seeds for his own downfall which no amount of external interference on our part could have forestalled.

Rovere and Schlesinger end their study with a cogent, defensive exposition of present US foreign policy. About the only adverse criticism they have for Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson is that neither has articulated it or projected it in a popular way. "The tragedy of the administration is that so few . . . Americans understand what it is up to . . . Mr. Truman has made all the necessary decisions with great and simple courage; but he has lacked the gift of illuminating them so that the people as a whole could understand their necessity."

This judgment emerges as only too tragically true when we see a man like General MacArthur so poor in political wisdom given popular allegiance as an authority at large. While the MacArthur myth accounts for a measure of this allegiance, the greater part of it must be the filling of the vacuum in public opinion, a vacuum created by an administration either unable or unwilling to communicate in a popular sense our foreign policy in at least its broad outlines.

Perhaps the weakest part of this book is the light slap on the wrist given Mr. Acheson for publicly announcing five months before the North Korean aggression that Korea lay outside the US defense perimeter.

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This, say Rovere and Schlesinger, was "foolish," but they imply it was also trifling and, after all, they argue, MacArthur was talking the same language at that time. No one, however, has yet explained why Korea, which was immaterial in January, 1950, five months later became crucial; or to put it from the viewpoint of the great majority of Americans who applauded President Truman's decision to defend South Korea, why it was not included in our defense perimeter five months before the attack. Since the State Department is still operating, presumably, on the theory that the US has the atomic-derived power to deter Soviet Russia, the failure to deter Communist aggression in Korea seems more aptly described as "grievous" than "foolish." And all the post-aggression reasons advanced as justification for UN action in Korea, valid as those reasons are, do not explain why the defense line drawn by Mr. Acheson in January, 1950, did not include defense of the Korean peninsula. Quite the contrary, the justifications for our continuing action in Korea merely make the January-June 1950 period all the more inexplicable.

Mr. Rovere and Mr. Schlesinger, in a generous appendage to their book, give us eight documents: the text of the Wake Island conference; two addresses by President Truman; two by General MacArthur; testimony of Secretary Acheson; and statements by General Bradley and W. Averell Harriman. Readers with a bias for MacArthur may read these and disregard the authors if they wish; and, if they are looking for truth, they will undoubtedly arrive at the authors' conclusions: that these are indeed troublous times in which General MacArthur was, for some months, a most perilous complication.

DONALD MCDONALD.

A Breeze of Morning. Charles Morgan. Macmillan. $3.50.

THIS may be the most decent love story to come by in a long time. A romance of the early, English 1900's, of Ann Harbrook, Howard Treladdin and Rose Letterby (even the names suggest propriety), the book is practically charged with decorum. There is not a blasphemy in it, nor a moment of forthright lust. Temptations regularly give way to common sense.

But this is not to say that the book is passionless, that love is an easy thing. The book is still the unfolding of a triangular romance, and as told through the eyes of fourteen-year-old David Harbrook (actually as he recalls the events forty years later), the book is neither stuffy, nor a bore, nor does young David see the world through merely juvenile eyes, not yet understanding. Himself caught up in an impossible infatuation with the beautiful Rose, five years his senior, the novel becomes as much the story of his own maturing as it is the maturing of a romance. Faithful to his lonely sister Ann, fascinated by Rose, unsure of Howard, his is the greater bit of growing up.

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To him Rose is "the source of all the beauty I should ever know in the world," although for most others she is not above suspicion, her mother having wasted away most of the family heritage in frivolity.

Ann, plain and quiet, hiding her sorrow in her heart, is unable either to declare her love for Howard or make it clear to Rose that she must leave him alone. It is her part to wait, and David waits with her, but the waiting only increases the tension. Until toward the close of the book David is moved to say: "I knew little of what had happened and understood little of what I knew . . . words were no longer of any use . . . I was in that pit of desolation into which the very young can fall, because their lives are deep and endless."

Charles Morgan writes with a craftsmanship that is uncommon today. One need not read far to see that here is an author in complete control of his story, in perfect understanding of his characters. Rose's father, though a minor character, is an example. A suburban squire, he is a lover of the classical life—he coached David in Latin, and summer Sunday afternoons he spent reading *Great Expectations,* "which he already knew by heart, and which he read again and again in the ever-frustrated hope that next time it would end differently"—yet a man weak enough that he would consider arranging Rose's marriage to the mortgagee of his estate.

This is Mr. Morgan's tenth novel, and the title is from Tennyson.

JOHN A. LYNCH.

The Magnificent Century. Thomas B. Costain. Doubleday. $4.50.

THE THIRTEENTH century in English history has not been overpopularized. In spite of a vague feeling that the signing of Magna Carta in 1215 was in some way the beginning of all civil liberty for the English-speaking peoples, few have attempted to dramatize those turbulent days. To Mr. Costain's vigorous narrative can legitimately be applied the overworked metaphor kaleidoscopic, for, like the images in that ancient toy, it abounds in simple bright colors, ever shifting their pattern In this new volume of *The Pageant of England* he covers the reign of the regrettable John's son, Henry III, who ruled England for over fifty years, marked by incompetence, extravagance, petulance, broken promises, civil war, violence and magnificent buildings. The story, as befits a pageant, is reduced to simple terms and certain figures and events stand out clearly—William the Marshal, Hubert de Burgh, Simon de Montfort, the shifty king, and young Edward who becomes king on p. 363 and will presumably hold the center of the stage in the next volume.

The Magnificent Century is a good specimen of popular historiography, but it illustrates the difficulty of writing colorfully about a period inadequately documented and poorly illustrated by its contemporaries. Mr. Costain has done his best, but the

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novelist and the student within his breast are at odds, and at times he suffers from creditable scruples. He itches to sketch a person or to describe a character, and the records elude him. He must therefore fall back on the imaginary peep into the past. Thus of Peter des Roches, the king's crafty treasurer, he writes: "History supplies no picture of him and no hint of his outward guise. So much is known of the manner of man he was, however, that the imagination may be allowed some latitude in picturing him, this first class villain who held the center of the stage through the first scenes of Henry's reign. Having lived the life of a soldier and traveler and not the sedentary existence of a churchman, he would be lean and hard rather than paunchy and soft" etc., etc. There are so many of these reconditioned worthies that the reader grows sceptical, even to doubting whether all the fair and romantic ladies were quite as beautiful as Mr. Costain claims.

Indeed for an author who eschews footnotes and is more concerned with painting than with minute scholarship, it is better to omit the bibliography and the apologetics of "would," "doubtless," and—most deadly of all—"we may be sure." The professional student will not take *The Magnificent Century* seriously anyway; the common reader, for whom the book is intended, wants a good tale, and he does not trouble whether the portrait of Queen Eleanor is based on a dozen original sources or has been touched up by Mr. Costain's fervid pen. It should be added that those who like pageants of history will enjoy *The Magnificent Century* and learn much from it; and they will look forward to the next volume.

G. B. HARRISON.

I Had to Know. Gladys Baker. Appleton-Century-Crofts. $3.

GLADYS Baker Patrick is an ex-Southern belle who became a successful foreign correspondent. Using brains and beauty to good effect, she obtained the only interview ever granted a correspondent by Kemal Ataturk, the Turkish dictator. Using the same weapons she cracked Mussolini's defenses and won an important interview.

I Had to Know is Mrs. Patrick's story of her life and her conversion to the Catholic faith. It is also as detailed and vivid a report as you are likely to see anywhere of how Bishop Fulton Sheen goes about making a convert. Finally, it is an account of how one woman rose above the heavy discouragements of a mysterious and seemingly incurable disease.

Mrs. Patrick writes in a lively and popular style. Although it deals with basic questions, *I Had to Know* is easy reading. But it is not just a slick and superficial tale. At the center there is a hard core of wisdom, faith and courage that anyone can recognize as part of the top heritage of universal man.

Gladys Baker Patrick deserves a good sale for her book. It is a moving story. And to me one of the most moving aspects of it is the very fact that a woman on a sick bed had the strength of mind and heart to write it. To anyone who has ever longed for either physical or spiritual health *I Had to Know* should prove good reading. JOHN C. CORT.

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George Washington. Douglas Southall Freeman. Volumes III & IV. Scribners. $15.

GEORGE Washington enjoys a pedestalled and marbled fame that is embodied in the antique gestures and symbols of Roman republicanism. The early mythmakers in the style of Livy—writers such as Washington Irving—froze the civic gesture and dehumanized the aristocratic virtues. There is left an unloved city in his name, a monument, an eighteenth century museum, and engravings of an aloof face. Democracy has found more congenial folk heroes in Jackson, Lincoln and the Roosevelts; Washington rigidly rebuffs the folk sentimentalist. Many historians, including Woodrow Wilson, have failed to recreate him and the debunkers have vitalized not a man, but ambition, sensitivity, land hunger and occasional anger.

Douglas Freeman's volumes are a monument of industrious and unperceptive archaeology. All the trappings—the furniture, cloth and account books—are exhumed but the recreation is not yet. That work will draw heavily upon his research. His own study does not come off and, I think, for two reasons. First, the author seems greatly to lack the perspective of the age. He knows a multitude of details but does not often select and emphasize the detail which illuminates or darkens the setting of an age. Thus, in Freeman's work, Washington, so utterly unalienated from his time, moves in a disjointed eighteenth century. Second, he is determined to tell almost everything about Washington and the result is a staggeringly large and cluttered canvas.

Here and there the volumes momentarily leap to life—for example, when Washington takes over the command of the Continental Army. Military affairs quicken the author's interest. The reader will regret the disproportioned sereness all the more because the author's brief character sketches, attached to portraits, are very good indeed. Possibly these books are the product of fatigued labor. A shorter, more reflective study from the author might well recapture a reserved character, honorable, disciplined, judiciously blending self-seeking and public service—in short, an aristocratic character to inspire democracy's emulation.

M. A. FITZSIMONS.

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Interior Life of St. Thomas Aquinas. Dr. Martin Grabmann. Translated by Nicholas Ashenbrener, O.P. Bruce. $2.75.

WHEN a distinguished scholar decides to write on the spiritual life of his patron saint and master, one can expect a book that will combine the finest qualities of research and understanding. This is what Dr. Grabmann has achieved in this small volume on St. Thomas. Since he has also written with great devotion and love, the result is a moving group of essays.

From the saint's writings and canonization process Dr. Grabmann has selected three outstanding characteristics for consideration: wisdom, love and peace, devoting a chapter to each with a final essay on the Christ-centered interior life of Thomas. Besides the above-mentioned sources, Dr. Grabmann has epitomized the testimony of countless biographers and commentators and appraised the artistic tributes of painting and verse concerned with the life and virtues of St. Thomas. In less accomplished hands this could have resulted in a tedious cataloguing of pious clichés such as was characteristic of another age of hagiography. In the hands of Dr. Grabmann these are evaluated with a clarity and logic which form a tremendous and incontrovertible tribute to the interior life of St. Thomas.

Nine pages of footnotes are gathered in one place at the end of the book together with a complete index. The whole book is an astonishing ninety-two pages in length, a fact which makes the price seem all out of proportion to its size. The publishers should be congratulated on producing it, but they should not be surprised if it does not receive the sales it deserves.

JAMES F. KITTLESON.

• REVIEWERS •

DONALD MCDONALD is a member of the editorial staff of the *Catholic Messenger,* Davenport, Iowa diocesan paper.

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